
Dave Fuller <davefuller84@gmail.com>
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AppropriationTestimony
Regarding Bill 6354

Dear Appropriations Committee Chair and Honorable Members,

I am writing on behalf of current legislation bill 6354, which would reduce staffing levels at the State Elections Enforcement Commission, particular of the elections officers and legal staff. I believe that these cuts would be devastating to our clean elections system, and that the election officers provide a valuable and necessary resource and line of communication for candidates seeking state offices, their treasurers and other campaign staff and volunteers.

I am in part a campaign consultant by trade, and have worked with campaigns on both sides of the aisle. Because of the Citizens Elections Program (CEP) I have personally worked with candidates who otherwise would not be able to run for office if it weren't for the CEP grant. I have served as a treasurer and campaign manager to many campaigns, and needless to say the regulations regarding state and local elections are daunting, even if a candidate does not participate in the CEP, or if it is a candidate for local office. This places a lot of pressure and questions for treasurers and candidates who would otherwise be intimidated by the wording of regulations. The elections officers and legal staff play a much needed role in guiding candidates, treasurers and campaign managers through the process with streamlined and accurate information in order to keep our elections and campaigns clean and compliant with CT statutes. Without these resources and staff, many first time treasurers and candidates would be lost in the process. During the course of a campaign, there are several irregular transactions that take place whether its receiving online contributions, holding fundraising events, or working with contractors, mail houses and increasingly digital and seemingly low cost media. The election officers and legal staff provide direct guidance in helping keeping a campaign in good standing with CEP regulations, and broader state election laws and best practices. The election officers are also very proactive in inviting treasurers and campaign staff to trainings for the electronic filing system known as eCRIS, as well as going over best practices and the regulations governing state legislative officers.

I also want to take this time to personally thank and commend Paige Adams and Andrew Cascudo who have been election officers for campaigns I have consulted in recent election cycles. Without their help, the campaign committees would have had a difficult time applying for the grant, complying with expenditure limits, and not receive essential legal and regulatory information in a timely and succinct manner.

Any reductions in staffing in these key staff areas I believe will have detrimental effects on our electoral system and will make running for office less inviting for both incumbents and new comers alike all all parties and affiliations.

Sincerely,

David Fuller
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